

SPOTLIGHT ON RAY

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Cuba Exiles Pin Hopes on 3 Leaders

Miami, Chicago and much of the nation in recent days have buzzed with anticipation of new attacks on Cuba. This report by the Latin American editor of the Miami Herald puts the news, the rumors and the hopes in perspective.

BY AL BURT

Chicago Daily News Service

MIAMI—On this Cuban Independence Day, exiles are pinning their hopes on the long shot that what Fidel Castro did to dictator Fulgencio Batista, they can do to Castro.

Primary focus of this hope is exile leader Manuel Ray, who promised a year ago that he would be in Cuba on this day to begin a new underground war against Castro.

Crowding Ray for attention are two other major exile figures, Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo and Manuel Artime, and some 300 exile groups in this area.

Giving urgency to all this is the possibility that Castro might be reckless enough to carry out his threat of shooting down a U.S. U-2 surveillance plane over the island.

THE CONSTANT REVOLUTIONARY, planning and plotting, fills the air with rumors, and these are seized so eagerly by the exiles that they become larger as they ricochet.

The best example of this is the last week in Miami. There was one piece of action, a commando or sea attack against a Cuban sugar mill by Artime's group, the Movement for Revolutionary Recovery.

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But the exiles know the promises and plots of their leaders have more teeth in them than they have had for more than a year.

If Ray, Gutierrez Menoyo and Artime fail, it probably will not be for lack of money and equipment. The Ray and Gutierrez Menoyo followers live modestly, and do not appear to have much money to spend on themselves. However, they acknowledge they have arms. Artime's followers seem more prosperous.

THE SOURCE OF EXILE MONEY is not known. Prior to the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, it was obvious there was U.S. backing. This time the picture is not clear. The United States denies support.

Ray has staged a bond drive and collection campaign. He

obviously has other support. Venezuela and Costa Rica are known to look upon him favorably, and a Venezuelan workers' confederation of 1,400,000 workers pledged itself a year ago to do all it could to help.

Gutierrez Menoyo tried collection systems from exiles and U.S. companies who once did business in Cuba.

Artime acknowledges help from Central America, primarily Nicaragua. He appears to have the most money, arms and open support. He is remembered as a Central Intelligence Agency favorite in the Bay of Pigs.

If any of them are getting U.S. money, they are more secretive about it than ever before. If any U.S. money is involved, it apparently is coming from outside normal channels and being doled out through Latin America governments.

If this is true, it would approximate the manner in which Russia pours arms into Cuba, which in turn uses them in subversive efforts against other Latin governments.

(Dr. Luis Conte Aguero, leader of the Sentinels of Liberty organization, reported that Cubans and 20 Soviet "technicians" in Cuba are constructing a huge new underground "military base" near Havana, according to United Press International.

(Conte Aguero disclosed receipt of a letter from U.S. Atty. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy assuring that "freedom will come" to Cuba. The letter was in the form a Mother's Day greeting to the exiles.)

U.S. ADVICE TO EXILES, who have chafed under policy designed to prevent raids from U.S. shores, has been to use a non-U.S. base, not to hit any Russians in Cuba and not to hold sensational press conferences in which they exaggerate anything that happened.

Many exiles just don't seem to believe the United States means it, and attempts to operate here repeatedly are stopped. Artime's MRR felt the wrath of the United States after its raid last week, when it exaggerated what had happened. As a result, any new announcements probably will be made from Central America.

One group, called the Commandos Mambises, is cited as handling its operations the ideal way. A spokesman in Central America cables the details to Miami in factual outline, and nothing else is said.

Ray and Gutierrez Menoyo lean to the left politically, and Artime would be located somewhere around the center or a bit to the right.

RAY BELIEVES HE CAN eventually split the power structure of Castro, and score a coup or break off a piece of territory for open fighting. He assumes the United States won't let Russia interfere. Such a project would depend on his ability to persuade top government and military figures through a sabotage campaign that he has what it takes to succeed.

Gutierrez Menoyo and Artime would make more conventional approaches—commando attacks, guerrilla warfare and whatever they can summon in the way of sabotage. Gutierrez Menoyo calls upon many of the same group inside the island that Ray does. These are the early Castro followers, who they insist were betrayed by him. Artime would eventually rest his hopes of success on hemispheric help.

Of all the exiles, only Ray has not made promises he didn't keep, and has stuck by the principles with which he began. The others finally came around to his way of thinking that Cubans must lead the fight to free Cuba.

That is why, even among exiles who don't appreciate his liberal politics, Ray is setting the exile pace. Even the other exile leaders, who would never admit it, feel that Ray has the same quality that enabled Castro to pull through the long fight against Batista.